

1997-98 SESSION
COMMITTEE HEARING
RECORDS

Committee Name:

Joint Committee on
Finance (JC-Fi)

Sample:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt01a
- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt01b
- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt02

➤ Appointments ... Appt

➤ **

➤ Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

➤ **

➤ Committee Hearings ... CH

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➤ **

➤ Executive Sessions ... ES

➤ **

➤ Hearing Records ... HR

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➤ Miscellaneous ... Misc

➤ 97hrJC-Fi_Misc_pt137_LFB

➤ Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

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WISCONSIN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

Affiliated with the National Education Association

**JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE TESTIMONY
REGARDING 1997-99 BIENNIAL BUDGET (AB 100/SB 77)
BY
TERRY CRANEY, PRESIDENT
WISCONSIN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 1997**

MY NAME IS TERRY CRANEY, I AM THE PRESIDENT OF THE WISCONSIN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION COUNCIL. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK CO-CHAIRPERSONS BURKE AND JENSEN AND MEMBERS OF THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR PROVIDING THIS OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET BILL (AB 100/SB 77).

BUDGETS ARE BLUEPRINTS THAT CREATE A FRAMEWORK FOR STATE GOVERNMENT. OVER A YEAR AGO WEAC TOOK THE LEAD AND DEVELOPED A BLUEPRINT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION. THAT BLUEPRINT IS OUR LEGISLATIVE AGENDA. OUR MEMBERS, THE TEACHERS AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL IN YOUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS, PROVIDED THEIR EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE TO DEVELOP THESE PROPOSALS.

WEAC OFFERS INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE SCHOOLS SUCH AS PARENTAL AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT, SCHOOL SAFETY AND DISCIPLINE, PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS, AND REDUCING CLASS SIZE, AMONG OTHERS. ANY DISCUSSION OF EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT MUST ALSO INCLUDE THESE IMPORTANT ISSUES.

THE GOVERNOR HAS OFFERED A PLAN THAT FALLS SHORT OF A COMPLETE VISION FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN WISCONSIN. HE DID INCORPORATE ONE OF OUR ISSUES IN THE BUDGET, EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY, WHICH IS ONE OF THE ISSUES I WOULD LIKE TO COMMENT ON IN ADDITION TO THE BUDGET'S TREATMENT OF OTHER EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS.

EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY:

- WEAC APPLAUDS THE GOVERNOR'S RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY FOR WISCONSIN'S CHILDREN. WE ALSO NOTE THAT MUCH OF THE GOVERNOR'S PLAN IS IMPLEMENTED THROUGH FUNDING THAT IS OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT REVENUE CONTROLS. WEAC'S LEGISLATIVE AGENDA ALSO RECOMMENDS THIS EXEMPTION.
- THE ISSUES OF CONCERN WITH TEACH ARE WHETHER IT IS NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH A NEW STATE BUREAUCRACY, THE TEACH AGENCY, TO ADMINISTER TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS, THE COUNTING OF UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND APPROPRIATIONS TOWARD THE TWO-THIRDS FUNDING OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS AND MAKING SURE THAT THE COMMON SCHOOL FUND REMAINS VIABLE FOR THE FUNDING OF LIBRARIES.
- WEAC EMPHASIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF RESOURCES FOR TRAINING TEACHERS AND STAFF. WEAC APPLAUDS THE PROVISION OF BLOCK GRANTS TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR THE PURCHASE AND MAINTENANCE OF COMPUTER HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE AND GRANTS TO CESA DISTRICTS TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL AND TRAINING ASSISTANCE. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT EDUCATORS KNOW HOW TO USE NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN THE CLASSROOM. BUT WE CAUTION THAT TECHNOLOGY IS ANOTHER VERY IMPORTANT TOOL IN A TEACHERS TOOL BOX. DISTANCE LEARNING IS ALSO AN IMPORTANT PART OF EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY, BUT EDUCATION IS MORE THAN A TALKING HEAD ON A T.V. MONITOR.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES IN EDUCATION:

NOW LET ME MOVE TO SOME EDUCATION PROPOSALS THAT WEAC FEELS ARE MISSING RELATIVE TO INNOVATION IN EDUCATION.

- IMPROVING SCHOOL SAFETY, DISCIPLINE AND CLASSROOM CONTROL IS AN ISSUE WE BELIEVE MUST BE ADDRESSED. ALL CHILDREN HAVE A RIGHT TO LEARN IN A SAFE AND PRODUCTIVE CLASSROOM. WEAC BELIEVES THAT THE TEACHER SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO DISMISS FROM THE CLASSROOM AN UNRULY, DANGEROUS OR DISRUPTIVE STUDENT, WITH READMITTANCE ONLY AFTER A PARENT CONFERENCE AND WITH THE CONSENT OF THE TEACHER.
- REDUCING CLASS SIZE IN GRADES K-3. WEAC BELIEVES AND RESEARCH CONFIRMS THAT ONE OF THE MOST POSITIVE EFFECTS ON STUDENT LEARNING OCCURS WHEN CLASS SIZE IS REDUCED IN GRADES K-3. THIS CLASS SIZE REDUCTION HAS A LONG LASTING EFFECT THROUGHOUT THE STUDENT'S EDUCATION CAREER. THE GOVERNOR HAS FAILED TO LIVE UP TO THE COMMITMENT TO THE SAGE PROGRAM. WEAC SUPPORTS CONTINUED FUNDING AND EXPANSION OF THIS INNOVATIVE PROGRAM TO LOWER CLASS SIZE IN NEEDY SCHOOLS.
- DEVELOPING PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS IN GRADES 4, 8 AND 10. WHILE THE GOVERNOR HAS PROPOSED A HIGH STAKES EXIT EXAM FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, WE BELIEVE THE EXAM IS ONLY ONE PIECE OF THE PUZZLE. WE URGE THE RESTORATION OF PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS WHOSE FUNDING WAS ELIMINATED FROM THE LAST BUDGET. FURTHER, THESE TESTS ALLOW FOR THE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND TEACHERS TO EVALUATE TEACHING AND LEARNING AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS IN INSTRUCTION.
- MODIFICATIONS OR REPEAL OF THE QUALIFIED ECONOMIC OFFER LAW. THE CURRENT QEO LAW: UNFAIRLY RESTRICTS COMPENSATION AND CREATES CONFLICT IN THE BARGAINING PROCESS BY REMOVING LOCAL CONTROL OVER LABOR MANAGEMENT RELATIONS; CREATES AN UNLEVEL PLAYING FIELD AT THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TABLE; EXACERBATES THE CURRENT TEACHER SALARY INEQUITIES BETWEEN SCHOOL DISTRICTS; UNFAIRLY PENALIZES CERTIFIED EDUCATION EMPLOYEES OVER ALL OTHER PUBLIC EMPLOYEES AND HAS A DRASTIC IMPACT ON THE LIFE-LONG PENSION BENEFITS OF RETIRING EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS.

- MODIFICATION OF THE STATE IMPOSED SCHOOL DISTRICT REVENUE CONTROLS. SCHOOL DISTRICT REVENUE CONTROLS: SUBSTANTIALLY LIMIT THE AUTHORITY OF LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS TO RAISE AND SPEND FUNDS TO PROVIDE AN EQUAL, COMPETITIVE EDUCATION TO STUDENTS; EXACERBATE THE PER PUPIL SPENDING DISPARITIES AMONG DISTRICTS; INHIBIT THE ABILITY OF LOCAL DISTRICTS TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN ADEQUATE FACILITIES AND ARE UNFAIRLY IMPOSED ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN THAT NO OTHER UNITS OF GOVERNMENT MUST ABIDE BY SUCH CONTROLS.

FINALLY LET ME COMMENT ON A NUMBER OF ITEMS THAT ARE IN THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET.

AGENCY TRANSFERS:

- WEAC IS TROUBLED BY THE TRANSFER OF MANY EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT POSITIONS FROM DPI AND THE WTCS TO OTHER AGENCIES. THE TRANSFER OF PROGRAMS SUCH AS ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE, THE FAMILY AND SCHOOLS TOGETHER, AND ALL SCHOOL-TO-WORK PROGRAMS ARE PROPOSED IN THE NAME OF EFFICIENCY. WE CAUTION THAT THIS STRATEGY COULD LEAD TO A CRUMBLING OF QUALITY OF SERVICES TO SCHOOLS AND CHILDREN.

MODIFICATIONS TO CHARTER SCHOOL LAW:

- CHARTER SCHOOLS PROVIDE SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS IN WISCONSIN'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS. WEAC BELIEVES THAT PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE FULL PARTNERS IN THE ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHARTER SCHOOLS IN WISCONSIN. SB 77/AB 100 CONTAIN PROVISIONS THAT ATTEMPT TO BREAK DOWN THIS PARTNERSHIP. CURRENTLY, CHARTER SCHOOLS CAN BE ESTABLISHED THROUGH A PETITION PROCESS OR SCHOOL BOARD INITIATIVE. SB 77/AB100 REPEALS THE PROVISION THAT REQUIRES THOSE PETITIONING TO ESTABLISH A CHARTER SCHOOL, TO OBTAIN THE SIGNATURES OF AT LEAST 10% OF THE TEACHERS EMPLOYED BY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OR BY AT LEAST 50% OF THE TEACHERS EMPLOYED AT ONE SCHOOL IN THE DISTRICT. THIS CUTS PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES OUT OF THE PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING CHARTER SCHOOLS.

- PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES SHOULD NOT BE FORCED TO SACRIFICE THEIR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE WISCONSIN RETIREMENT SYSTEM IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CHARTER SCHOOL. WEAC URGES THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND LEGISLATURE TO REPEAL PROVISIONS OF THE CHARTER LAW THAT PROHIBIT CHARTER SCHOOLS IN MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM BEING INSTRUMENTALITIES OF THE DISTRICT. ANOTHER OBSTACLE TO PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN CHARTER SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT IS THE LANGUAGE THAT MAKES CHARTERS SCHOOLS IN THE MPS A PROHIBITED SUBJECT OF BARGAINING. THIS LANGUAGE PREVENTS COOPERATION BETWEEN LABOR AND MANAGEMENT IN THE CREATION OF CHARTER SCHOOLS IN MILWAUKEE.
- WEAC SUPPORTS PROVISIONS IN CURRENT LAW THAT INSURE A REVIEW OF CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACTS AT LEAST EVERY FIVE YEARS AS AN IMPORTANT MEASURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY. WE URGE THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND LEGISLATURE TO DELETE THE GOVERNOR'S REPEAL OF THIS MEASURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY.
- WEAC IS OPPOSED TO AUTHORIZING THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE, THE CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE AND THE MILWAUKEE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE DISTRICT BOARD TO OPERATE, OR CONTRACT WITH A GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL TO OPERATE, A CHARTER SCHOOL. THE AUTHORITY SHOULD REMAIN WITH THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD.
- LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO LOCAL TAXPAYERS FOR SPENDING ON K-12 SCHOOL PROGRAMS. A PERIODIC REVIEW OF CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACTS ENSURES THAT TAXPAYERS ARE GETTING THEIR MONEY'S WORTH. UNDER CURRENT LAW, LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE HELD ACCOUNTABLE IN THREE MAJOR AREAS: STUDENT PERFORMANCE, FISCAL MANAGEMENT AND ADHERENCE TO THEIR CONTRACT AND THE CHARTER SCHOOL LAW. THE CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT MUST CLEARLY STATE THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULAR GOALS, METHODOLOGY, AND MEANS OF ASSESSING STUDENT PERFORMANCE. THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD IS THE APPROPRIATE ENTITY TO EVALUATE THESE CONTRACT PROVISIONS.
- THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE SHOULD REMOVE ALL OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL PROVISIONS FROM THE BUDGET AND REFER THEM AS SEPARATE BILLS TO THE ASSEMBLY AND SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEES.

YOUTH OPTIONS PROGRAM:

WEAC BELIEVES THAT THERE HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN AN UNDER SERVED STUDENT POPULATION; STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT BOUND FOR A FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE. WE BELIEVE THAT THE DETAILS MUST BE EXAMINED VERY CAREFULLY BEFORE THE PROGRAM IS INITIATED. SOME OF THE ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED RELATING TO THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSALS ARE:

- THE FISCAL IMPACT ON HIGH SCHOOLS THAT HAVE LIMITED FLEXIBILITY TO PAY INSTRUCTIONAL COSTS AND SUPPLEMENTAL CHARGES TO TECHNICAL COLLEGES BECAUSE OF REVENUE CAPS.
- THE FISCAL IMPACT ON TECHNICAL COLLEGES THAT MAY NEED TO PROVIDE MANDATED EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND OTHER SERVICES TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS. THE SUPPLEMENTAL CHARGE FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE THE SERVICE, WHILE THE HIGH SCHOOL MAY NEED TO CONTINUE THE SAME LEVEL OF SERVICES FOR OTHER STUDENTS.
- THE IMPACT ON STUDENTS FOR TRANSPORTATION, TOOLS, DAILY EXPENSES, AND EDUCATIONAL COSTS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TUITION AND FEES.
- THE ISSUE OF ACCESS FOR STUDENTS IN RURAL AREAS PARTICULARLY WHERE THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE CAMPUS IS A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE AWAY FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL. DISTANCE LEARNING NETWORKS CANNOT PROVIDE COMPLETE ACCESS ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL "HANDS ON" EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES.
- THE QUESTIONS OF INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE IN THE TWO SYSTEMS MUST BE ADDRESSED ALONG WITH THE ISSUE OF TUITION PAYMENTS AND TRANSFER OF FUNDING SOURCES.

STATE FUNDING FOR SCHOOL OPERATION COSTS:

- THE LEGISLATURE SHOULD CLOSELY EXAMINE THE CALL FOR A RETREAT FROM A SUM-SUFFICIENT APPROPRIATION BACK TO A SUM-CERTAIN APPROPRIATION TO COVER 2/3 FUNDING OF LOCAL SCHOOL OPERATION COSTS. SUM-CERTAIN APPROPRIATIONS ARE BASED ON ESTIMATES OF REVENUE THAT ARE EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE FOR PROGRAMS. INSTEAD OF A YEARLY ESTIMATE BY THE DPI, DOA AND THE LEGISLATIVE FISCAL BUREAU, THE BUDGET CALLS FOR THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE TO CALCULATE THE AMOUNT NECESSARY TO MEET THE 2/3 STATE FUNDING

COMMITMENT TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS EVERY TWO YEARS.

- THE SUM-CERTAIN MECHANISM IS LESS FLEXIBLE IF REVENUE ESTIMATES ARE INACCURATE. THERE IS ALSO LITTLE OPPORTUNITY FOR ADJUSTMENTS IF REVENUES IN THE FIRST YEAR OF A BIENNIUM FALL SHORT. THEREFORE, IF THE STATE RETURNS TO A SUM-CERTAIN APPROPRIATION, IT MAY JEOPARDIZE THE 2/3 COMMITMENT AND END UP ONLY REACHING THE GOAL EVERY OTHER YEAR.

FUNDING FOR THE DPI:

- FUNDING FOR DPI'S OPERATION CONTINUES TO BE WHITTLED DOWN TO LEVELS WHICH WEAKEN ITS STRUCTURE. COMBINED WITH FUNDING CUTS FOR SUPPLIES AND SERVICES, THE BUDGET REQUIRES THE DPI TO SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEARLY HALF A MILLION DOLLARS IN CUTS EACH YEAR AS "EFFICIENCY MEASURES." THESE ACTIONS COULD HARDLY BE CHARACTERIZED AS POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT FOR THE AGENCY AND SHOULD BE REVIEWED.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS AND TESTING:

- THE MAINTENANCE OF STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC EDUCATION IS A GOAL UPON WHICH EVERYONE CAN AGREE. IT IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF A SYSTEM THAT PREPARES STUDENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT, CONTINUING EDUCATION AND PRODUCTIVE LIVES. WEAC SUPPORTS STANDARDS THAT ARE DEVELOPED IN WISCONSIN BY EDUCATORS, PARENTS, BUSINESS LEADERS, AND CITIZENS. WITHOUT THESE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS, STANDARDS ARE UNLIKELY TO BE ACCEPTED AND ARE UNLIKELY TO HAVE THE DESIRED POSITIVE EFFECT ON STUDENT LEARNING.
- MANY QUESTIONS COME TO MIND AS WE REVIEW THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED MODEL STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT. WHAT ARE THE RESPECTIVE ROLES OF THE GOVERNOR AND STATE SUPERINTENDENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE MODEL STANDARDS? ALTHOUGH A STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL IS CONVENED, THE BUDGET WOULD GIVE THE GOVERNOR FINAL APPROVAL OF THE STANDARDS TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER. IN OTHER WORDS THE GOVERNOR HAS THE FINAL WORD.

AGAIN, THANK YOU CO-CHAIRPERSONS BURKE AND JENSEN AND
MEMBERS OF THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO

SPEAK WITH YOU TODAY.

PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE 4/16/97 - MADISON WISCONSIN

Good morning Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee. I am Michael Jackson. I am a member of the Wisconsin Southeast Association of County Veteran Service Officers (otherwise known as the South East Association). The member counties of this group include: Dane, Dodge, Jefferson, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Rock, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha. I serve as Dane County Veteran Service Officer.

I am here, before you as representative of the Southeast Association, to offer brief testimony on the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs 1997-99 biennium budget request. Although my message is brief, our resolve as veterans advocates is steadfast. In the main, the Southeast Association supports the Departments budget, we think that overall it is a good one, however with one exception -- the 50% reduction of the part-time study grant (PTSG). We do not support this aspect of their budget. In my opinion, the PTSG as it exists now is not a threat to a solvent Veterans Trust Fund.

At a time when educational expenses are certainly not decreasing it would not be helpful to veterans, nor their families, to reduce their benefits. You have

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probably heard CVSOs serve on the front line and we serve as the Departments' delivery system for their programs. Should this proposed reduction be approved, we would also be in the unenviable position to answer the veterans questions and those of their elected representatives as to why this benefit was reduced, and how did you Mr. or Ms. CVSO, also known as Veterans Advocate, let it happen. It is my hope these are questions none of us will have to address.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on this issue, and I am prepared to answer questions should you have any.


MICHAEL R JACKSON

BUDGET HEARING TESTIMONY

4-16-97

My name is Chantel Buckeridge. I work with the Visiting Nurse Service as a Home Health Aide. I've been doing CNA work for six years. I'm here today to give you a feeling for what I do as a home health aide and the difference I make in my patients lives.

One of my patients is a 42 year old man who is paraplegic. He is able work but he can not dress himself, give himself a bath or check for pressure sores. When I visit him I do catheter care, bathe him and prepare him with a snack and a drink. I fix his bed and put a chux (a protective pad) under him. Because this patient has home health care he is able to work and to remain independent and in his own home. He tells me that if he wasn't able to have me come to his home, he doesn't know how he'd survive.

I have another patient who is bed bound because of spinal cord disease. He has heart problems and diabetes. He has a history of very bad bed sores. Since Visiting Nurse Service has begun providing care, his skin has been basically intact except for a few superficial bed sores. His only other care giver is his wife who has severe back and hip problems. Each visit I bathe him, provide skin care to prevent wounds, I do range of motion exercises with him to keep his arms and legs from spasming. I also do light chore services to help his wife since their laundry is in the basement. This man is alert and oriented. He is a kind and caring man who is able to stay in his home because of Visiting Nurse Service. If he did not have a home health aide he would not be able to remain in his own home.

So many of my patients tell me that if they didn't have people like us, they would be forced into a nursing home or into some other type of institution.

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM**State of Wisconsin**

DATE: April 15, 1997
TO: George E. Meyer
FROM: Peter Muñoz - ODA

FILE REF:

SUBJECT: State Council on Affirmative Action

The Wisconsin Evaluation Survey Report recommends the elimination of the Council on Affirmative Action. The justification for this recommendation is based on the premise that the Council's activities are "duplicative and redundant". However, the elimination of the Council will have a significant adverse impact on the future AA/EEO programs in the Agency.

Counter to the report's conclusion, the work of the Council is neither duplicative nor redundant. Rather, it performs the crucial function of providing citizen involvement in the process of setting the State's AA/EEO/Diversity mission, and strategy for implementation of its related programs. The report cites the presence of AA Officers and advisory committees internal to agencies as performing duplicate function as the Council. However, this argument is erroneous because it ignores the fact that AA officers and advisory committees are employees of the State and, as such, concentrate in matters internal to Agencies. As our agency moves toward ecosystem based management, the importance of the role of the Council in providing an avenue for citizen input becomes self-evident.

The Affirmative Action Council has played a key role in maintaining Wisconsin's progressive leadership among state governments in the area of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity. Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law was one of the first, and remains one of the best state laws in the country in safe guarding AA/EEO. It is through these laws that our Agency is able to implement its exemplary AA/EEO programs. Given current national movement against affirmative action, DNR needs the Council firmly in place in order to ward off any attempts in Wisconsin to destroy its programs. Indeed, the effort to eliminate the Council itself may be considered a key part of carrying out this movement in our State.

DNR has identified AA/EEO/Diversity as an important Secretary issue. Therefore, DNR should strongly recommend to the Legislature that the Council be kept firmly in place as a key component in attaining it's goals.

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Thank you for giving us the opportunity to voice our concerns about the pending budget. My name is Sam Edwards. I'm Regional Director Vice President of Sales for S. Abraham & Sons, a Milwaukee-based distributor of tobacco products, grocery products, and health and beauty products, among other things. Our company employs 200 people in Wisconsin.

We are against any increase in the excise tax on cigarettes for several reasons:

- 1) Retailers are hurt because raising the excise tax, by any amount, encourages cross-border traffic. When consumers cross the border to purchase cigarettes, they buy other products as well. The state of Wisconsin should not be encouraging Wisconsin consumers to go to other states to purchase these products. When it happens, not only do retailers get squeezed, but our business is hurt also. The American Economics Group estimates revenue loss to retailers because of even a \$.25 increase could result in 3,200 lost jobs.
- 2) More than any other group, retailers and distributors like ourselves are concerned about the problem of youth access to cigarettes. But the biggest myth about raising the excise tax on cigarettes is that it will reduce youth smoking. Studies by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control show that raising the tax has little effect on youth smoking. In fact, in some cases, youth smoking rises when tax is increased. That actually happened in Illinois, Nebraska, and Hawaii. Raising the price of cigarettes only increases the "forbidden nature" of cigarettes, which as we all know because we were young at one time, is appealing to youth.
- 3) There's no doubt the state will benefit initially from a tax increase. But the cigarette tax is not a reliable source of revenue. Adult smokers simply will find alternative low-tax or no-tax sources for cigarettes. When that happens, the state will be back for another increase. Adult smokers already pay \$200 million annually in cigarette taxes. It's time to examine other ways to fix the state's problems.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Edwards". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

AGEADVANTAGE



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Testimony

Lucille M. Baker, Executive Director
Prepared for the Joint Committee on Finance
Public Hearing
Madison, WI
April 16, 1997

Thank you for the opportunity to come before this committee to express my concern over the ways the 1997/99 budget bill will affect the growing disparity between the funding for institutional care and community based care in the critical time before the state redesigns its long term care system. My name is Lucy Baker. For fifteen years, I have served as the Administrator and more recently as the Executive Director for AgeAdvantAge, Inc. The agency is the not-for-profit organization designated as the Area Agency on Aging for the twelve counties of southern Wisconsin. As such, we work daily with the Aging Unit Directors who run county aging services in our district. We help them develop and evaluate the programs that mobilize volunteers and resources that make rural aging programs the models of community involvement and success they are.

Many frail older people and their caregivers are making a go of staying part of their communities and families by living independently with a bit of help from various sources. We pay a lot of attention in Wisconsin (and rightly!) to the Community Options Program and its associated MA Waivers in keeping our institutional costs down through a judicious use of Medical Assistance dollars, state funds, county funds and the elbow grease of caregivers, friends and volunteers.

We have had a nationally envied tradition of public policy specifically aimed at this Wisconsin blend of community based care and institutional care. And for good reason: it works for people and our budget. During the past year untold hours of good thought and hard work by state staff and administrators, with the guidance of committees of older and disabled people, members of the long term care industry, counties, aging and disability agencies and their associations have been preparing to redesign this system. The redesign will make the \$2 billion that Wisconsin spends each year go further, tap into the natural support systems that currently provide 80% of all long term care, and assure that

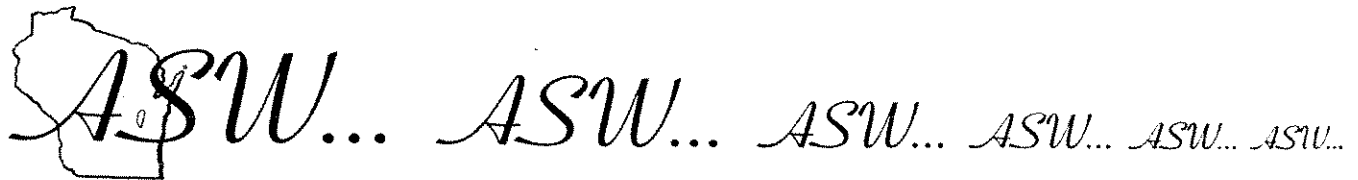
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money will follow people. No longer will frail people be forced into expensive institutions to get care. In the new system, that money would be available to purchase care often at a lesser cost in their communities. This is a big change in public policy and a smart move in keeping long term care costs down while serving more people better.

We feel that the 1997/99 Budget is out of step with the public policy preparations and goals of the Long Term Care Redesign. Perhaps legislators who have also been involved in the planning of the Redesign share our surprise at the sheer size of the \$132 million increase to a nursing home industry that is serving fewer people every year. One has only to look at effect that the \$5 million increase for the Community Options Program to see the disparity. For its \$5 million, the community care side will cover its increased costs to continue AND serve 400 more people.

I hope that you will agree with me that the state budget cannot be so out of step with the coming innovations that the state itself is working so hard to realize. While the Boren amendment may mandate some increases for nursing homes you might reconsider the way that the mandated amounts are calculated. Just imagine how odd our long term care reality has become when as inflationary increase to institutions is so huge that it dwarfs the entire community based care annual budget of \$119 million. How odd has our long term care reality become when the funding for pilot projects meant to start testing the Long Term Care redesign concepts were removed in order to save money? This budget further opens the door to an expensive institutional bias that we all know we can't afford. I urge you to do the following:

- ✓ **Eliminate the 8,900 COP waiting list and restore the transfer of nursing home funds to COP (Act 469).** Remember that providing more funds to nursing homes does NOTHING to increase the number of people they serve (which is decreasing) and that the growth in Wisconsin's long term care population is on the community based side.
 - ✓ **Restore the funding for pilot projects to test the redesign of the Long Term Care System.**
 - ✓ **Fund the Elder Rights Proposal** that expands funding for the Statewide Benefit Specialist program, expands the Nursing Home Ombudsman Program including the Volunteer Ombudsman Program, and increase the services available to victims of elder abuse.
 - ✓ **Fund these and other Community Care increases using a nickel increase in the cigarette tax, reinstatement of Act 469, and elimination of the Senior Citizens Income Tax Credit.**
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PUBLIC HEARING -April 16,1997

Senator Brian Burke, Representative Scott Jensen and Members
of the Joint Committee on Finance:

Members of the Autism Society of Wisconsin have struggled over the years to keep their children with autism at home and out of the state institutions. Those who have succeeded have saved the state and federal MA budgets over a million dollars per family. Some of these families have had help through the family support and respite programs but most have not had access to these resources.

All of these families have had the resource of public education for their children and for this we are grateful. Recent federal and state changes in definitions and training are offering better educations to our children. This fact and the use of improved therapeutic interventions have meant that young people with autism are having unprecedented academic success. It is imperative that categorical aids for special education continue to reimburse local school districts at current levels.

Our adults with autism want to continue to live in the community. We must recognize that for most of them, this is the cost effective as well as the preferred alternative. Wisconsin must begin to fund community services at a level that will provide quality vocational and residential services and prevent staff turnover (currently from 35% to almost 100% in some agencies).

We urge you to recognize that the \$132,000,000 increase for nursing homes in the next biennium is larger than the entire annual \$119 million budget for COP and the COP Waiver. In addition, the proposed budget cuts Community Aids by \$7.3 million and reduces the state's GPR commitment by \$31.8 million dollars (substituting federal funding at risk of future cuts).

It is not easy to parent a child (and later an adult) with autism. The families who succeed usually have two parents who can work together and often an extended family to offer support. We must recognize the difficulties of parents on W-2 and their increased need for child care while the child is young and after age 12, if the parent is to be able to work. In addition, there are also families with disabled parents. The current plan to offer only \$77 per child per month to parents on SSI who must comply with W-2 is an invitation to starvation. We must not be that inhumane and we must recognize that this short sightedness will lead to increased use of more expensive foster care.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Frances Bicknell
Legislative Chair.

Erma Winter
Juneau Wi
Dodge County

Joint Finance Committee
April 15, 1997

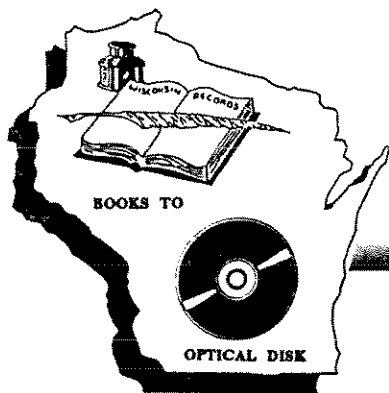
Dear Members

I am the mother of a young man with mental retardation. He lives home with my husband and myself. He is 47 yrs old. He needs Community option (COP) services, to continue to live at home. We are aging parents with an aging child living in our home. Besides my son there are 120 people with retardation in Dodge County on a waiting list waiting for services. The Community option (COP) program saves money for the County and State when our family member can remain living at home. More funding monies should be allocated to this program for it also helps to keep many elderly out of the nursing homes. There by saving money. Please support the Community option (COP) program. to keep people in the community.

Thank you

Erma Winter

153 E. Oak Grove Juneau Wi 53039



WISCONSIN REGISTER OF DEEDS

Association

April 16, 1997

To: Members of Joint Finance Committee, Wisconsin State Legislature

From: Jane Licht, Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association President
(608)267-8814 FAX: (608)267-3110

Re: Provision to delete the Wisconsin Land Information Board

One of your colleagues shared Department of Administration Secretary Mark Bugher's letter to legislators with me. Mr. Bugher was presenting rational for elimination the existing Wisconsin Land Information Board, explaining that the proposed Wisconsin Land Council could easily take over the duties of the WLIB.

Our association disagrees with Mr. Bugher's position on this matter. The proposal is clearly a way for the Department of Administration to take over a very popular and successful locally-based program. We believe that a council of mainly state agency heads whose primary charge is to recommend ways of solving land use issues does not make a grass roots program for improving land information systems at the local level.

Over the last five years that the Wisconsin Land Information Board has awarded grants to counties and municipalities, learning curves and land information modernization have made dramatic progress in all areas of the state. I know from the experience of working in the trenches, being the one to actually implement a new indexing and imaging system, and being involved in the planning of our geographic information system, there is no way for state government bureaucrats to wave a magic wand and make it happen all across Wisconsin. There is no substitute for hard work and determination at the local level--the place where most land information is gathered, stored, and available for public access.

The Wisconsin Land Information Program--which is the WLIP plus the technical staff of three people, provides guidance, expertise, and distributes grant money to make land records modernization happen in counties and municipalities who are ready to tackle the challenge. The WLIP already has made great strides in developing a land information clearing house; having a Land Council take over would only slow down progress. The WLIP already effectively encourages communication and cooperation among governmental units involved with land information.

"FEW THINGS MUST LAST AS LONG AS COUNTY RECORDS"

From a land information point of view, land use planning is only one of many attributes of a multi-purpose land information system. Trying to have the tail wag the dog has never been a good idea, especially when the tail belongs to a different animal. The process of modernizing land information supports many government and private sector interests. But it is neutral when it comes to land use policy issues. Getting tangled in thorny, controversial land use policy issues can only be detrimental to land information system modernization--a discipline which is embraced by folks who may otherwise be antagonists, such as land developers and land use planners, Realtors and environmentalists.

The WLIP is not funded by state income tax dollars. It is totally funded by user fees. A surcharge was placed on the first page of every document recorded in the office of the register of deeds. The title insurance company officers, attorneys, Wisconsin Realtors, surveyors, utility representatives and others who have to take the heat for the increased fees did not complain about it because they understood the potential benefits of improved public access to better land information.

I suspect that there are officials within the DOA who covet the independence of the WLIP and the program revenue. I suspect that there are officials within the DOA of the old mindset that local governments can't do it and so big brother state government should step in and do it. But these state agency folks should remember that the state did not do so well with the KIDS state-wide computer program (it's still not working properly), and the first state UCC computer program was a total disaster. I also suspect that because there is no longer enough grant money to satisfy all the counties and municipalities ready to implement modern land information systems and thus, complaints are being voiced, that the DOA views the program as being vulnerable.

If the DOA is committed to the Land Use Council, then I think it is appropriate for Mr. Bugher to promote it. But not at the expense of the Wisconsin Land Information Program. This is the position our Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association took at the Spring Seminar in March of this year. Thanks for your time and consideration of this matter.

**Wisconsin
Retirement
Consortium**

Joint Finance Committee Testimony

1997-99 Biennial Budget (SB77/AB100):
State of Wisconsin Investment Board (SWIB)

by

Ken Opin, President, Wisconsin Retirement Consortium
Wednesday, April 16, 1977

Introduction

My name is Ken Opin. I am the President of the Wisconsin Retirement Consortium. We have seventeen organizations as members, representing management and labor, participants and annuitants. Collectively we represent virtually all of the participants and a significant percentage of the annuitants in the Wisconsin Retirement System.

SWIB

The Wisconsin Retirement Consortium supports the State of Wisconsin Investment Board's request for an increase in the budget to \$5.4 million, all from program revenue, to upgrade their information systems, up from the Governor's recommendation of \$3.5 million. SWIB has already shared with you their most recent cost information, and we urge you to pay close attention to it.

Please remember that all the funds to run SWIB are program revenue. To us, SWIB's program revenue is our members' pension money. We want it spent wisely. Excess spending means either increased contributions from participants and employers or lower pensions to annuitants. We watch this money closely.

We are convinced that SWIB's information system proposal is well thought out, a good use of our members' pension money, and a sound investment that we all hope will lead to lower costs, better information and higher pensions in the future.

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Thomas L. Frazier, *Executive Director*

Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups

Testimony Before the Joint Committee on Finance

April 16, 1997

by

Thomas L. Frazier

My name is Tom Frazier, Executive Director of the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups, (CWAG) a grassroots coalition of over 630 member organizations in Wisconsin. I would like to talk with you about our priorities for the 1997/99 budget.

Our top priority is long-term care, especially additional funding for the Community Options Program (COP). **Older persons and people with disabilities want to be able to remain in their own homes!** The Governor's proposed budget would do very little to address the needs and desires of older persons and people with disabilities who want to stay at home as an alternative to an institution. There continues to be an entitlement for institutional care and waiting lists for COP. For example: Ashland County has a COP waiting list of 119 people; Brown (463); Dane (1,449); Douglas (138); Kenosha (143); Marathon (113); Milwaukee (2,647); Ozaukee (39); Portage (4); St. Croix (32); Sauk (72); Shawano (36); Washington (4); Waukesha (881); Winnebago (68) and Wood County (49). This totals 6,257 older persons and people with disabilities who are your constituents who are on waiting lists, struggling day after day to keep their independence and dignity. Your constituents represent over 75% of the waiting list for COP.

Another nickel a pack tax increase on cigarettes would go a long, long way toward eliminating waiting lists. A nickel raises approximately \$20 million a year that would leverage an additional \$21 million in federal funds under the COP-Waiver program or a

total of \$41 million a year. This, combined with several other no-cost policy changes, would enable Wisconsin to take a giant step in the direction of long-term care redesign that your constituents on waiting lists would like to see.

Other priorities in the budget include increased funding for Elderly and Disabled Transportation programs funded with a gas tax increase, and expansion of the Ombudsman program, Benefit Specialists program and Elder Abuse programs funded by eliminating the \$25 senior citizen tax credit for higher income seniors.

In conclusion, the really good news in the budget is the projected decrease in nursing home utilization and decrease in the overall Medical Assistance caseload. On behalf of older persons and people with disabilities, I urge you to take the wonderful opportunity that exists in this budget to continue that positive trend, ~~and~~ to provide cost-effective long-term care services that is preferred by the real people who comprise those waiting lists.

My name is Dave Nelson and I am president of Wisconsin Smokers' Rights. I appreciate the opportunity to address the members of the state Joint Committee on Finance about the proposal in the budget to raise the cigarette tax by 5 cents per pack.

Our group represents [number] of adult smokers in our state who are fed up with measures clearly aimed at punishing us for the legal choice we've made to smoke. We firmly believe that our government should not use taxes, restrictive ordinances, or any other actions as weapons to control our lives.

The governor's budget includes a proposal to increase the cigarette tax by five cents, bringing the tax to 49 cents per pack. Some have argued that smokers should be grateful that only a five cent tax is being proposed and not the 56 cents per pack increase over two years that was proposed last year.

On the contrary, we are against this tax for several reasons:

- Cigarettes are one of the highest taxed products in this country, and Wisconsin smokers already pay enough taxes for their cigarettes. Legislators have already indicated that this 5-cent increase is just the beginning. Smokers, they said, can expect to be hit with incremental tax increases over several years.
- There is no need for a tax increase. After all, Wisconsin is not currently facing a budget crisis. If our state treasury needs more money, legislators need to come up with fair and effective ways to generate it — like cutting unnecessary spending.
- It is unfair to single out one group of citizens to pay for services that all of us benefit from. If our state needs money for particular programs or to balance the budget, every citizen in the state should have to contribute to the effort — not just smokers.
- Sales taxes increases invariably mean declining sales for retailers. And tobacco sales account for a large percentage of most retail stores' profits. This tax increase would amount to nothing more than a drain on legitimate retail profits. And after all, cigarettes are a legal product for adult smokers to purchase and retailers to sell.
- Tobacco products are an easy target for tax increases. Not everyone smokes and those that don't are eager to vote yes for a tax that won't apply to them.

DAVID NELSON

759 MONROE ST

OSHKOSH WI 54901

WISCONSIN SMOKERS RIGHTS COALITION

- A tax increase on adult smokers is not the way to stop kids from smoking. Last year, the Special Committee on Minors and Tobacco advocated the 56-cent-per-pack increase as a way to discourage minors from buying cigarettes. However, studies have clearly shown that raising cigarette taxes does not lead to an overall reduction in smoking. When cigarette taxes are raised people don't stop smoking, they just change their buying habits. They purchase low-cost brands, cross state borders for lower taxed products, or turn to the underground market. If we are going to address underage smoking, we must focus on education, enforcement, and parental involvement. The problem won't be solved by making retailers or their adult customers the scapegoats.

I urge the members of the committee, on behalf of Wisconsin Smokers' Rights, to strike the 5-cent-per-pack increase from the 1997 budget proposal. Thank you.

Joint Finance Committee Testimony

1997-99 Biennial Budget (SB77/AB100)

by

Mary Ann Braithwaite, President, Wisconsin Federation of Teachers

Wednesday, April 16, 1977

Introduction

My name is Mary Ann Braithwaite. I am the President of the Wisconsin Federation of Teachers. We represent 15,000 professional public employees in Wisconsin—K-12, Technical College and UW faculty and staff, UW teaching and graduate assistants, and the vast majority of professional state employees—from crime lab analysts to researchers to the DNR staffers who protect our clean air and water.

Because other WFT members and staff are registered to testify on UW and several state employee issues, I will focus my testimony on the Technical College System; Choice and Vouchers in the K-12 system; and three state agencies—WERC, DER, and the State of Wisconsin Investment Board—which cut across the lines and affect all our members.

WTCS

W2

For adults who are inexperienced in working on a regular basis, direct work experience is a key to achieving self sufficiency and we agree it is good public policy to emphasize work for individuals receiving public assistance. However,

- Employment and income are directly related to educational attainment
- The work world is becoming increasingly skill oriented
- Significant numbers of welfare recipients do not have the education required for skilled jobs
- Businesses are operating in a highly competitive environment and are reluctant to hire untested workers
- Minimum or near minimum wage jobs with poor benefits frequently are insufficient to lift families out of poverty

In order for W-2 to succeed, an educational component must be added. Hours spent in class plus two hours of study time for every hour spent in class should be allowed to meet the work requirement of W-2.

- **General aids**

WFT supports increasing the WTCS budget 4.5% annually; rather than the 1% increase offered by the Governor. General WTCS aid has remained frozen for the last three fiscal years, resulting in increased pressure on the property tax.

Youth options

WFT supports the youth option proposal, but we want to remind you of the importance of maintaining cost neutrality for the high schools, technical colleges and the students and their families. The object must be the best interest of the student—gaming the system for institutional financial advantage should never become a factor.

K-12

Public School choice

WFT strongly supports the establishment of a statewide public school choice program, as Governor Thompson proposes, on a space available basis. We recognize that only a small percentage of Wisconsin's students will ever take advantage of public school choice, but for a few it will be wonderful opportunity. As designed, it should be a program where everyone wins, no one loses. Clearly safeguards need to be put in place to avoid discrimination of any type, to not have choice become a tool for sports star recruiting, and other problems. But if one district has a program in Japanese, has space available, why shouldn't interested students in the area, but in other public school districts, be able to avail themselves of this opportunity?

Charter Schools

WFT opposes all the modifications of Wisconsin's charter school program included in the budget bill. We support the current language regarding establishment of charter schools that are instrumentalities of existing school districts. These programs have barely had time to get up and running, and some unexpected consequences have already occurred.

Let's give the current experiment enough time to figure out what works and what doesn't, rather than assume that any change from the status quo will automatically be an improvement.

Milwaukee private/parochial school voucher program

WFT opposes all aspects of the religious school voucher program, and we hope that the U. S. Supreme Court declares this issue unconstitutional once and for all, and we can get the focus back on making public education better.

State government operations

WERC and DER

WFT opposes the proposed staff reductions at the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission and the Department of Employment Relations. They have insufficient staff currently and this proposal would only make things worse. This year, for example, DER will be representing the State of Wisconsin in bargaining its first contract with the Public Defenders, a WFT affiliate. Perhaps there might be a short term advantage to us in having DER understaffed, but in the type of collective bargaining we hope takes place, we need DER to be fully informed of the issues and certainly we want them to be able to crunch numbers ASAP. What possible advantage could there be to eliminating an MIS position? Does DER plan to contract out collective bargaining?

SWIB

WFT supports the State of Wisconsin Investment Board's request for an increase in the budget to \$5.4 million, all from program revenue, to upgrade their information systems, up from the Governor's recommendation of \$3.5 million. SWIB has already shared with you their most recent cost information, and we urge you to pay close attention to it.

Please remember that all the funds to run SWIB are program revenue. To us, SWIB's program revenue is our members' pension money. We want it spent wisely. Excess spending means either increased contributions from participants and employers or lower pensions to annuitants. We watch this money closely.

We are convinced that SWIB's information system proposal is well thought out, a good use of our members' pension money, and a sound investment that we all hope will lead to lower costs, better information and higher pensions in the future.

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MATT SPEECH TO Joint Finance Committee - MADISON, April 16, 1997

My name is Matt Ward. I am 18 years old. I live in Cottage Grove, I am a senior at Monona Grove High School.

My parents found out I was autistic when I was 18 months old. I said my first word and learned my name when I was 2. My favorite toy when I was 2 was a jar lid. I loved to spin them. I used to try to spin everything. I could even spin kleenex boxes.

I had a vocabulary of 30 words when I was 3. Half of those words were the names of numbers. I started using short sentences when I was 4. I asked my first question when I was 5.

In grade school I spent about half of my time in an ED-LD classroom and half the time with regular students. I usually had an Aid with me, especially in the regular classes. These Aids were very important to me. They helped me pay attention in class. Sometimes they took me out of class when I got upset. I don't think I would have been able to learn as well without my Aids.

I went to almost all regular classes in junior high and usually had an Aid with me. When things got rough, I went to a resource room.

All through high school I have gone to regular classes by myself without an Aid. I do have a resource room, but I don't use it very much. I do all my own homework.

I have trouble communicating, but I am very smart. My non-verbal IQ tested at 144 four years ago. When I took a test of visual/spatial skills when I was in junior high, I scored higher than the top of the high school scale.

All through junior and senior high I have gotten mostly A's and B's on my report cards. I have a 3.23 overall grade point average for high school.

I am on the Math Team at Monona Grove High. Last year I took the American High School Mathematics Exam and got the 7th highest score in the state. I have been invited to join an honors calculus class at the UW this fall. It's a little easier for me to communicate with others about math because I understand it so well and like it so much. I don't look so different in a group where everyone has a pocket protector and a giant calculator in their back pocket.

I have problems with communication. My language is quite good, but conversation is stressful because it takes a lot of effort for me. Talking is easier if I can read the words. I have done a lot of work with speech and language teachers. This has helped me.

I still need some help to learn about the world, but I've come a long way. My Mom says the last thing she ever expected was to see me on the "Speaker's Circuit", but here I am.

Being autistic is part of who I am. Being able to talk to you like this makes me feel like I finally have a voice of my own. Remember me when you're making decisions about special education funding. Thank you for listening to me.

Mrs. Myrtle Macdonald
17 Hollywood R.
Madison, Wi 53713

4/11/79

608-222-4395

Wisconsin Smokers Rights

P. O. ox 7483

Madison, Wi ~~53707~~ 53707-7483

Re: April 16-th Hearing

I am very sorry that because of a bad back, I will not be able to attend the hearing.

I am 79 years old (1-18-1918) and have been a steady smoker for 63 years and am still alive. Even my dogs have all lived to be 16 years old. (this is their full life span for M. Sshnauzers. I have worked all my life (25 years with General Telephone of Wi and never missed a day in 25 years) I have been a widow for 29 years. lived alone live in mobile Court for 24 years and still do all my own work inside and outside.

I have a big gripe about taxing cigarettes more. For many of us old people this is our one pleasure. Also I am paying 44¢ a package and now they want \$1.00 more. When ~~they~~ they get everyone to quit what will they tax to make up for the cigarett tax loss and what will the tobacco farmers do for a living.

I have one other gripe. When I buy a carton of Cigaretts at the store why am i also taxed the .055 tax on them. Isn't it illegal to tax a tax. I have located cash register receipts which proves this point. I am already paying \$4.60 tax plus the .055 (\$1.00) which means I am already paying \$5.40 tax now. I am very concerned about paying tax on tax. This used to be illegal.

You have my permission to bring this up if it is useable. I am truly sorry that I can't be there. I will keep the sales slip from the Super Saver where I buy my cigarettes and they are at your disposal.

I hope you will be able to bring this up at the meeting. I was buying cigarettes when the were \$5 a package or 2 packages for 25¢

I have lived most of my 79 years in wisconsin and most of them in Madison. I am an old 1935 graduate of the Old Madison Central Hight.

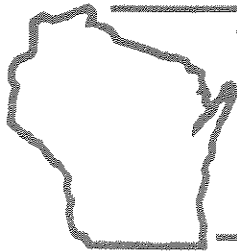
The best of luck at the meeting

P.S. I might add I have never missed one election not even a primary

Respectfully submitted

Myrtle T. Macdonald
Mrs. Myrtle T. Macdonald

cc/personal file



WISCONSIN FERTILIZER & CHEMICAL ASSOCIATION

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April 16, 1997

RE: Agrichemical Management Fund, DATCP Budget
By: Betsy Ahner, Executive Director, WFCA

The Wisconsin Fertilizer and Chemical Association has worked closely with the DATCP to develop the revisions included in the state budget bill and fully supports all but one of them as proposed.

The governor's version of the budget includes one provision that we think needs to be changed. As the **industry** share of the money accumulates in the fund and is held by the department until reimbursements are approved, it earns interest. In the past this interest stayed in the fund, but the governor's budget removes it and transfers it to the general fund.

This is money coming from the farmers of Wisconsin and it should stay in the program to benefit them. Removing this money will mean that the fees this bill reduces, will have to be reinstated sooner and at a higher rate than they would if the estimated \$428,000 in interest for the biennium, is retained to fund the program.

One other point of interest. Several of you have asked if the savings realized by our members as a result of the two year moratorium on the fee surcharges will reach the farmers. I have discussed this with my board of directors and members and they assure me that they intend to pass the savings on to their customers. They have always included the 1.3% charge on sales as a line item on the bills that their customers pay, so there is an exact accounting of the money collected.

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Agrichemical Clean-Up Program

The Governor's biennial budget contains a number of revisions to the ACCP that have been recommended by a DATCP committee which the WFCA sat on. In brief they include:

- [a] Money collected from Agrichemical Clean-Up Program surcharges will be segregated from the Agrichemical Management Program money and will be used only for clean-up activities.
- [b] The Governor recommends a two-year exemption from ACCP surcharge fees to spend down the high balance in the fund (estimated at \$8.6 million).
- [c] DATCP will be authorized to re-establish the surcharge fee in two years at an estimated 50% of current levels. A mechanism will be established to keep the fund balance from reaching a higher level than needed to operate the program.
- [d] Lapse \$2.7 million general purpose revenue from the continuing balance and reduce expenditure authority by \$600,000 over the biennium.
- [e] Eliminate deductible requirements for separate spill events and provide a lifetime deduction per site of \$3,000 for individuals and \$7,500 for licensed facilities and large businesses.
- [f] Eliminate reimbursement limits for separate spill events and replace them with a lifetime reimbursement cap of \$400,000 per site.
- [g] Establish an 80% state cost share for eligible expenses above the deductible, but below the lifetime cap of \$400,000.
- [h] Lower the threshold at which DATCP approval of work plans is required from \$20,000 to \$7,500.
- [i] Allow time spent by a responsible party on implementing a clean-up (not including management oversight) to be eligible for reimbursement.
- [j] Clarify the penalty provisions in the program to include any violation of the applicable statute or code, not only orders issued by the Department.

April 16, 1997

Joint Finance Committee
Budget Hearing
Madison, WI

Dear Sirs and Madams:

Every day I wonder how I will be able to put myself through school. How will I pay for it? Where will that funding come from? My name is Lara Bjorkquist, and I am a first-year student at the University of Wisconsin at Madison but am originally from Waukesha, Wisconsin.

I am here speaking against the possibility for differential tuition on the University of Wisconsin campus. The potential tuition raises because of differential tuition are astronomical. As it is, I am forced to work 2 jobs during the summer in order to pay for this university, and am worried that with a tuition increase I will be forced to increase my hours worked during both the summer months as well as the school year.

Additionally, the lack of increased funding for academic advising on University of Wisconsin campuses is a concern of many. Currently, as a freshman, I am forced to wait hours in order to see my academic advisor, and there have been times when the only "advisor" I was able to convene with was another student. Apparently this practice is acceptable to the university, but I will not accept this as adequate. More advisors are needed. When further along in my studies, I will be seeing an advisor for my Political Science major. It turns out that there is only one advisor for all students in that discipline. This is troublesome because if academic advising is faulty, it could result in my having to stay another year at the university, thus paying an additional year of tuition merely due to glitches in my advising. The job of the advisor is to guide me with my graduation preparation, including the required courses in my major and concentration. I feel that one advisor is inadequate to help all 900 Political Science majors.

My brother, who recently graduated from the University of Wisconsin -- Madison, was unaware if he would actually graduate on time because of poor academic advising. It seemed that the advisor made an error in addition, and he was two credits away from the required amount for graduating. Luckily he was able to, independently, make up the credits; however, that is not an option for many students on the campus.

This poor advising service has been problematic for many people, and because of its importance in the welfare of education, it is necessary that this aspect of the budget be fully funded. I also urge you to re-think the ramifications of differential tuition on students who can barely pay their way through school now, and what a tuition hike of this nature would do to the educational quality of Wisconsin. I have always been proud to say I went to the University of Wisconsin, as many others are. Are you willing to be responsible for closing the door to education? I hope you will seriously consider what these points mean to students, and make wise, informed decisions on the affects of these elements to our future.

Sincerely,

Lara Bjorkquist

Lara Bjorkquist
821 West Johnson Street
404 Ewbank Sallery B
Madison, WI 53706-1798

Support for RED and ADD grant funding increases

Thank you for allowing me to address your participants.

I am Paul Scharfinan, owner and President of Specialty Cheese Company, Inc. Our firm owns three cheese plants in Dodge county, employs fifty people and takes milk from some sixty local dairy farms. We make refrigerated natural cheeses for the Hispanic, Arab and Kosher markets as well as traditional Brick and Muenster cheeses. In addition, we are now making a new form of cheese: shelf stable cheese snacks called "Just the Cheese". I am both a member of the Dairy 2020 Board and the recently renamed PATS (Program on Agricultural Technology Studies). For those of you who don't know, that makes me eligible for mud slinging from both the left and the right.

Our firm has used both the RED and ADD grant programs. We used the RED program to help finance a product quality study for our Hispanic cheeses before we introduced them to market in 1992. As a result of the study we were able to adjust our formulations and enter the market with what are still considered to be the best tasting Hispanic cheeses anywhere.

As founding president of the Wisconsin Specialty Cheese Institute, I used ADD grant funds to do market research. The research identified a dozen promising concepts that would be appropriate for the State's small cheese companies. Our "Just the Cheese" snacks are an outgrowth of one of those concepts.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the State of Wisconsin has the opportunity to be the hotbed of innovation in the Dairy Industry worldwide. Some of you have heard me say that our challenge is not to beat the low price of California cheddar. Instead, our future lies in producing the largest number of the highest quality of specialty cheeses. We have the cheesemakers, the heritage, the high quality standards and the excellent milk supply needed to do so. The competition is not California. It is France. We should lead the world in specialty cheeses.

To do so, however, we must give our farmers and our innovators encouragement. Ten days ago I had a man by the name of Jack McCellan in

my office. He is a dairy farmer from California who sold his herd and wants to start a 1200 cow operation in Wisconsin. He's got a business plan. He's got experience. He needs to convince people to invest in his business. The only way to do so is to commission a feasibility study. That's what RED could do to help him.

What of the cheese innovators? We would like more ADD grant funding to work together to sell our cheeses. We've put together a booklet of our products, now we need to educate chefs and consumers. ADD funding could help us figure out how to do so.

But both programs are currently underfunded. We have the wonderful problem that both programs have too many good ideas coming at them.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am here to support increasing the funding for RED and ADD in your budget deliberations.

Specialty Cheese Company

455 S. River St

Lowell, WI

53557

414-927-3000



WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON

**CHILDREN
and FAMILIES**

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**Testimony
Committee on Joint Finance
by Anne Arnesen, Director**

The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families is a statewide, multi-issue child advocacy agency. As such there are a number of issues in the state budget that affect the well-being of children, but in the interest of time I will only address a few. I am submitting testimony with more detail on some.

First is W-2. The real issue for welfare reform is poverty. Research shows that there are often bad outcomes for children who grow up in poverty: juvenile delinquency, lack of school achievement, teen pregnancy etc. Welfare reform should be more than case load reduction and can provide us with the opportunity to address poverty if we do it right. It is an opportunity to build neighborhoods and lives if we provide support for families and children. Some good things are happening with Wisconsin's program, but as our W-2 paper "What Needs Fixing? The Remains of the Day." you could seize the opportunity to make W-2 profoundly better.

One of the most egregious deficits in the program is the elimination of education and training for welfare recipients. Education and training at the University and Voc Tech schools was not only an opportunity for people to get off welfare, more importantly, it took them out of poverty. This morning I was amazed to read in the Wall Street Journal that the Hudson Institute, which was one of the designers of W-2, is releasing a report on the anticipated shortage of highly skilled workers in this country. They propose that the U.S. will need to increase its supply of skilled workers partly by attracting more skilled immigrants and providing training to the unskilled. It seems it would be far more prudent for Wisconsin to provide the education and training to qualified W-2 recipients to develop the skilled Workforce which is available needed before we start recruiting immigrants.

Other W-2 Issues are included in an attachment.

A statewide association of citizens and organizations dedicated to improving health, education and human services for children and families. Supported by grants, contributions, the United Way and Community Shares campaigns.

We have some serious concerns about two K-12 education proposals in the budget

Public school choice and youth options both threaten the financial stability of school districts already struggling under the tight revenue caps. Under the Governor's budget proposal, school districts will be required to pay the costs for students who choose to participate in the youth options program and public school choice, even though they may be attending a private school or taking a course for enjoyment rather than educational credits or attending a neighboring school district for reasons other than educational benefit. An Iowa Department of Education survey indicated that only nine percent of students chose a neighboring district for "educational benefits."

Districts cannot save dollars on the margin. In other words, if students leave a district through school choice or the youth options program, it is unlikely that the resident district can reduce its own costs proportionately because their enrollment will not be reduced in sufficient numbers to allow them to reduce their personnel costs. Therefore, and most importantly, the costs of allowing students to exercise choice will be born by the resident district and the those students who continue to "choose" their home district. We should not be enacting public policy that has the potential to harm the education of the vast majority of our public school students.

Two issues in Juvenile Justice should be addressed. The transfer of the funding to counties for first time offenders is perplexing. The program was established as a line item on the recommendation of the Governor's Task Force on Juvenile Justice counties were demonstrating creative and effective programs. Now it has been consolidated into a prevention program in DHFS and is not necessarily directed at this needy population. While I support prevention this was never the intent of the program. I would urge you keep this program in the Division of Juvenile Corrections.

Finally, counties programs funded by Youth Aids are going to be severely compromised by the recommendation to provide no increase to their budgets to reflect the increased rates in correctional facilities as was the practice for years. The move represents a cost shifting to local taxpayers that ought to be avoided. The same argument can be made for the change in Community Aids. A reduction in funding and increased use of federal funds in the Community Aids programs seems to reflect a lack of state commitment to the human service program. This cost shifting to the counties represents a state backing away from its commitment to serve children and families.

We will be releasing a paper next week the elimination of state funding for immunizations. We look forward to the state's plan to insure that all children in Wisconsin have health insurance and access to services. We are second best in the country now, ranking only behind Minnesota in the percentage of children covered. We want to be best.